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State Representative Maria Sachs
Attends First Meeting of the Statewide Task Force
on Human Trafficking

TALLAHASSEE -- State Representative Maria Sachs (D-Delray Beach) will attend the first meeting of the Statewide Task Force on Human Trafficking on Friday, October 30, 2009, in Miami.

Task Force members are expected to discuss a report by the Florida State University's Center for the Advancement of Human Rights Report (CAHR).

CAHR's report, entitled [Florida Responds to Human Trafficking](#), was one of the first research projects to analyze human trafficking, beginning with direct victim interviews. The Center is currently engaged in creating a Strategic Plan for Florida to better coordinate statewide efforts to eliminate trafficking and to better assist victims. Among the study's findings:

- Florida is one of the top three "destination states" within the U.S. Florida's economy, demographics, large numbers of immigrants. The presence of military bases, industrial sectors such as a large service industry, agriculture and the presence of large airports, coastlines and other transit ports makes our state attractive to traffickers.
- It is not known how many people are trafficked into the U.S. annually, but recent estimates range from 18,000 to 50,000.
- The reports calls for law enforcement and victim advocates to develop a team approach to cases of human trafficking. According to the report, their ability to work together to help victims of trafficking can make or break a criminal case.

Among the task force's objectives is the drafting of a legislative proposal designed to address this critical issue.

The Statewide Task Force on Human Trafficking is a 19-person panel created to evaluate the problems of human trafficking and to make recommendations on action and strategies for reducing or eliminating the trafficking of human beings in Florida. Representative Sachs, who was appointed to the task force by Florida Governor Charlie Crist, is the only State Representative on this Task Force.

"Human trafficking has quickly become among the leading crime issues in South Florida, one that affects every Floridian," said Representative Sachs. "It's truly a human tragedy and Florida just happens to be at the center of this global epidemic."

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